



# Comprehension Activities

Comprehension activities are interactive and meaningful ways for students to engage in the text with one another. Activities can be tailored to target a specific comprehension skill and/or type of text. Students may work in as individuals, pairs, small groups or as a whole group.

## ➤ **Picture Walk (K-3)**

Purpose: Prepare students to engage with and fully comprehend the text they are about to read

Directions: Preview the book by looking at the title and cover of the book and examining the pictures. Ask students to discuss what they see and make predictions about the book such as characters, setting, plot, and ending. Highlight and define new or difficult vocabulary words in context.

## ➤ **KWL Chart (grades 3-12)**

Purpose: Help students actively understand, engage with, and integrate knowledge from texts.

Directions: Give a brief synopsis of the text student are about to read. Draw three columns on a sheet of chart paper and label each one with a K, W, and L.

1. Before reading the text, have students to fill in the K column with what they know about the subject of the text, and what they want to know or learn in the W column, e.g. questions, predictions, etc.
2. After reading, have students fill out the L column with what they learned as a result of reading the text.

## ➤ **Graffiti Walls (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Engage with a text as a group using an age-appropriate, poster-size graphic organizer.

Directions: Print out or draw a graphic organizer on a sheet of chart paper. (Access 58 PDFs of graphic organizers for comprehension:

([http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic\\_organizers.htm](http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers.htm)). Hang the graphic organizer on the wall and have students work in small groups to summarize or analyze the text using the “graffiti wall.”

Examples:

- Story Board (K-5): Students illustrate major events in a story.
- Compare and Contrast Venn Diagram (grades 6-12) - Students analyze what is different and what is the same between two texts.

## ➤ **It Says-I Say: Post It Note Text Rendering (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Engage with a text while making inferences and connections.

Directions: Students use post-it notes to place a check (✓) next to the statements with which they agree; an exclamation point (!) next to statements that appear to state a main idea or key point; and a question mark (?) next to statements that confuse them. On each post-it note, students write out their own thoughts/notes (“I say”) to promote student-text interaction.



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## ➤ **Summary Ball (K-12)**

Purpose: Summarize text using an interactive whole group activity.

Directions:

1. Write the questions Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How on an inflated beach ball, using a permanent marker.
2. After reading a narrative, have students toss around the ball in a small group. Ask each student who catches the ball to look to see which word is closest to his or her right thumb, and to answer a question with regard to the text just read.
3. Record the students' responses on chart paper to provide a group summary

Source: [http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum\\_lp\\_SummaryBall.pdf](http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum_lp_SummaryBall.pdf)

## ➤ **Rate this Book! (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Summarize stories or books read in a creative way.

Directions: Create a movie review or illustrated poster to summarize and evaluate the text considering characters, plot, style and ending.

## ➤ **Question of the Day Reading Response Journal (grades K-12)**

Purpose: Record reading summaries that can be shared with other readers.

Directions: As a story is being read (individually or as a read-aloud), have students discuss and write down important issues, themes and ideas in their Reading Response Journals. Younger students may draw their answers or write simple phrases.

Sample Question of the Day:

- What was important in the chapter? How do you know?
- What is something new you learned? Explain.
- What connection(s) did you make? Explain.

Source: [http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum\\_lp\\_ReadingResponse.pdf](http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum_lp_ReadingResponse.pdf)



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## ➤ Paper Bag Reports (grades 3-8)

Purpose: Show understanding of characters, setting, conflict and resolution by choosing symbols that represent significant events or characters in the book.

Directions:

1. On the front of a lunch bag, students draw a scene from a book that they have read. They also include the title of the book, the author's name and their name.
2. On the back of the lunch bag, students write the names of the main characters and summarize the conflict and resolution.
3. Inside the lunch bag, students place objects that represent significant events in the book. Students would create objects using art materials or draw them. Students could also put in objects that represent aspects of the character's personality.
4. Students share their Paper Bag Reports with classmates.

Source: [http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum\\_lp\\_PaperBag.pdf](http://reading.ecb.org/teacher/pdfs/lessons/sum_lp_PaperBag.pdf)

## ➤ Exit Slip or Ticket (grades 3-12)

Purpose: Check for comprehension at the end of reading time.

Directions: Place one of the following statements/questions on the board/chart paper. Students must respond to it on a slip of paper or index card in order to move from reading time to their next activity.

- I would like to learn more about...
- The most important thing I learned is...
- One question I had...

## ➤ What's Your Opinion? (grades 3-12)

Purpose: Ask students to consider new information to confirm or revise their opinions in a specific area.

Directions:

1. Write eight-to-ten statements related to the text that students can agree and disagree with.
2. Before reading, have students decide whether or not they agree or disagree with each statement.
3. Read the text silently or together.
4. After reading, have students confirm or revise their opinion as a result of reading the text.

Adapted from [fcr.org](http://fcr.org)



# Comprehension Activities

## ➤ **GIST Statement (grades 3-12)**

Purpose: Summarize text for a concise main idea or key point

Directions: Students come up with a 10 word GIST statement (a concise text summary describing the main idea or answering questions such as who, what, when, where, why, and how) of an article or text they have just finished reading. It may help to use Twitter as an example of a communication venue where writing must be concise and to the point (140 characters or less). Have students share out their GIST statements.

## ➤ **Double Entry Journal (grades 6-12)**

Purpose: Engage with a text while making inferences, reflections and connections.

Directions: Students fold a piece of paper in half. Ask students to actively search for potential reflections as they read. In the left column, students write meaningful, interesting or confusing phrases/sentences from the text they noticed. In the right column, students react to the text by writing personal responses including comments, questions, or connections.

## ➤ **Question Cards: (grades 6-12)**

Purpose: Discuss text and check understanding by using question cards.

Directions: Prepare a set of question cards for each student or for each group of students. Question cards can be general comprehension questions that can be used for any text or customized for a particular text. Students may also generate their own set of question cards and exchange them with another group.

Sample Questions:

- What do you think is going to happen next?
- Discuss any words you may not have known.
- Based upon what you have read, what are you curious or interested in knowing more about?
- How does what you read relate to your own life?
- Summarize what you have read in 20 words or less.

Directions:

1. Place question cards face down in a stack. Provide each student with a copy of the text.
2. Taking turns, students select six cards from the stack and place face down in a row.
3. Student one reads the first paragraph aloud and selects a random card to read the question.
4. Student one answers the question. Discusses answer with partner. Students take turns.
5. Continue the activity until all the questions cards are face up, the questions are answered, and the text is read. Use questions twice, if necessary.

Adapted from fccr.org